

RHODE ISLAND HISTORICAL SOCIETY COLLECTIONS

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The steam-boat Massachusetts which ran between Providence and New York.

Richard W. Comstock, Jr. Memorial Collection

See page 20

Issued Quarterly

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HOWARD W. PRESTON, *President* EDWARD K. ALDRICH, Jr., *Treasurer*
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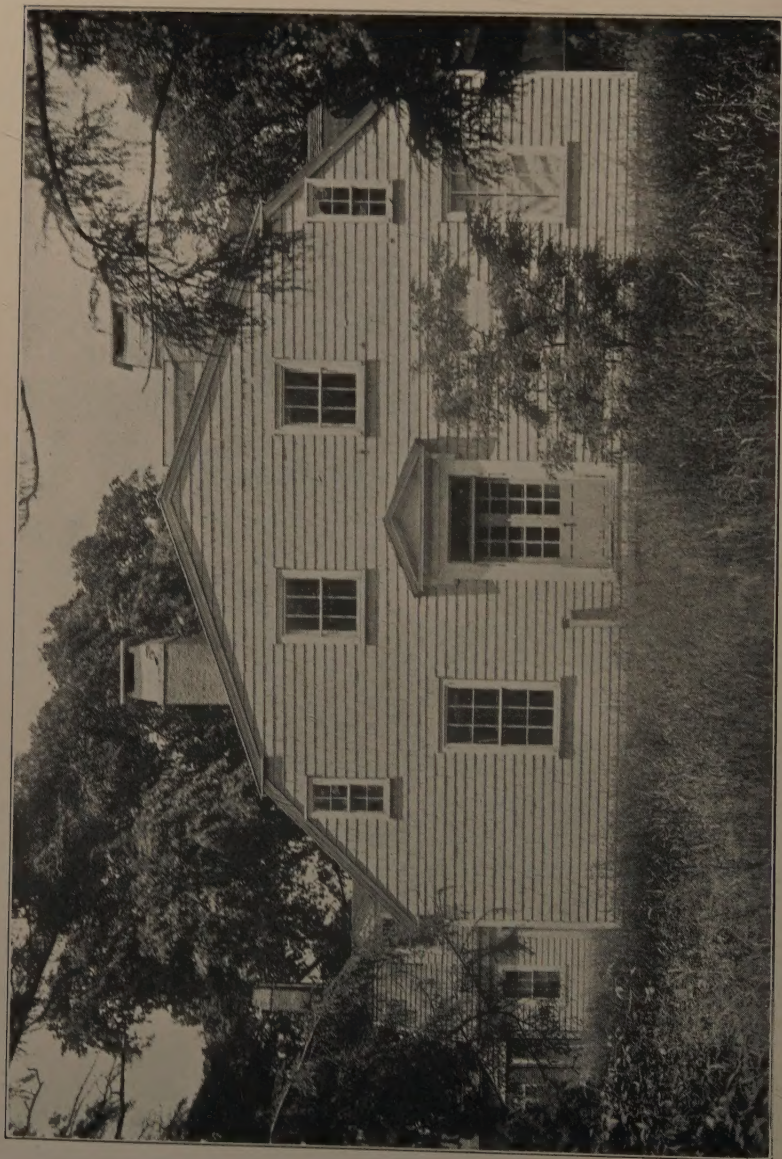
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Point Pleasant William Vassall's Confiscated Estate

BY HOWARD W. PRESTON

Few Bristol houses evoke as many interesting memories as the old broad, gambrel-roofed home at Point Pleasant on Poppasquash Neck. Not only its secluded position across the harbor from the busy town of many nationalities, but even the atmosphere of neglect that surrounds it renders it more vocal of the past. The shades of the by-gone frequenters of this pleasant spot seem present to the sympathetic spirit.

Tradition has ascribed the building of the house to Nathaniel Byfield, one of the four merchant speculators of Boston, who after King Philip's War bought of the Colony of Plymouth, King Philip's country, Mount Hope and Poppasquash Neck. Byfield was a practical promoter, he removed his residence from Boston and settled on the tract of land he proposed to develop, building a house in the new town, new Bristol (not destined, despite the hopes of it, to become the commercial rival of Bris-



Point Pleasant, Bristol, R. I.

tol, England), and another on Poppasquash Neck. He was a constant office holder, representing the town in the Plymouth Colony General Court, serving as Chief Justice of the Court of Common Pleas in the County of Bristol, and also as Judge of Admiralty for Massachusetts, New Hampshire and Connecticut. He must have been a persistent hater, for angered by Governor Joseph Dudley he voyaged to England, strove, but in vain, to obtain the governor's recall. In his old age he returned to Boston to die and be laid to rest in the Westminster Abbey of New England, the Granary Burial Ground in Boston. Later the estate passed to Judge Nathaniel Hubbard.

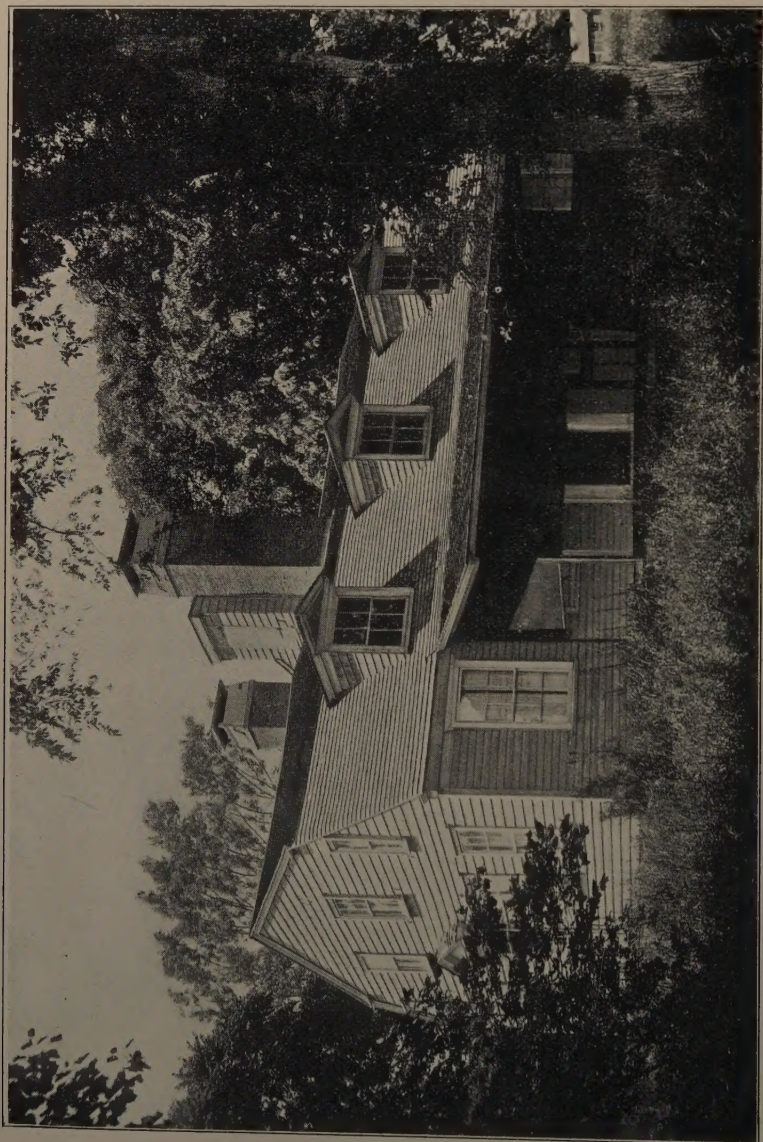
There are those who seem to speak with authority when they aver that the house built by Byfield stood farther north near the head of the neck, and after passing through a period of degeneration was demolished many years ago.

Certain it is that Margaret Hubbard, daughter of Nathaniel, was, according to the records of St. Michael's Church, Bristol, married April 21, 1760, to William Vassall, of Boston, as his second wife. In 1762, Mr. Vassall bought the rights of Rebecca Hubbard relict of Nathaniel Hubbard in the estate on Poppasquash Neck, and also parcels from the other Hubbard heirs. Henceforth the place is known as the Vassall Farm.

The Vassalls were a well known Massachusetts family, owning not only property in New England, but lucrative estates on the island of Jamaica. John Vassall, the elder brother of William, built and occupied the dignified mansion in Cambridge, later famous as the headquarters of General Washington during the siege of Boston, and the home of Jared Sparks, but better still as the home of the poet Longfellow.

"Once, ah, once within these walls,
One whom memory oft recalls,
The Father of his Country dwelt."

William Vassall was a man of education (Harvard 1733) and refinement. He made the farm a gentleman's country estate, with gardens and appurtenances. Like others of his order he was faithful to their traditions of loyalty. He was appointed a



Point Pleasant, Bristol, R. I.

Mandamus Councillor in 1774, and though never sworn, yet the fact of his appointment proclaimed his loyalty to the king, and seemed to show his disloyalty to the liberties of America. On a visit to his farm, it is said, he was mobbed by the townsfolk of Bristol and his carriage pelted with stones. He took the hint and remained in Boston. In March, 1776, when the British army evacuated Boston, he accompanied them to Halifax, whence he sailed to England, which henceforth became his home. He was included in the act of banishment enacted in 1778 by Massachusetts. Fortunately he was not ruined by the war as so many of his party were, as his Jamaica estates remained to support him. He died in 1800 at Battersea Rise, England.

The absentee landlords were the first to lose control of their property. The General Assembly of Rhode Island at the December Session, 1776, ordered the Sheriff of Bristol County to take possession of the real estates belonging to William Vassall, Isaac Royall and Thomas Palmer, suspected of being enemies to the United States, while the Sheriff of Providence County was ordered "to take possession of two horses belonging to said Vassall now in Providence." It was also ordered "that the commanding officer in the County of Bristol is directed to cut as much wood off said estates as shall be wanted for the use of the troops stationed in the towns of Bristol and Warren, keeping an account of the quantity and making as little waste as possible" (R. I. Col. Rec. VIII, 66).

The next year, June, 1777, the Assembly appointed a committee to inquire after and make an inventory of the personal estate of William Vassall and commence actions for the rents due for the real estates of William Vassall and Thomas Palmer (R. I. Col. Rec. VIII, 261). Thomas Palmer later through his attorneys claimed that he had removed from Massachusetts Bay to Paramaribo in Surinam, and had "on all occasions by a uniform conduct testified his friendship" to the United States. Apparently his estate was released.

The receipt of £946, 08s, 3d for one year's rent from Shearjashub Bourne for the farm lately belonging to William Vassall is reported in July, 1799 (R. I. Col. Rec. IX, 11).

Information was filed by Walter Channing at the session of the Superior Court of Judicature held at Providence, November, 1779, against William Vassall, who was cited to appear before the Superior Court of Tiverton in July, 1780; and the *Providence Gazette* of December 18, 1779, gave notice of this; describing the property as "a certain farm or tract of land situated in said Bristol containing by estimation about two hundred and fourteen acres, be the same more or less, with a dwelling house and other buildings thereon standing bounded as follows: by northerly on land of Thomas Green, easterly on salt water, southerly on land belonging to the Church of England School in said Bristol, westerly on the salt water together with all the rights," etc.

Meanwhile, preparation for the reception of Rochambeau's sick soldiers was necessary, and the General Assembly in June, 1780, ordered "the buildings on the farm in Bristol lately belonging to William Vassall, Esq., to be immediately put in proper repair to receive the sick soldiers and such additional buildings to be erected on the said farm and on the school farm adjoining as shall be sufficient" (R. I. Col. Rec. IX, 86).

The next month, July, the Vassall Farm is again before the Assembly. "Whereas the officers of His Most Christian Majesty's hospital have requested this Assembly to appropriate a suitable piece of land on the States farm at Poppasquash for the burial of such as may die at the said hospital—It is therefore voted and resolved that the principal director of said hospital be permitted to choose for the purpose aforesaid such a part of the said farm as may be convenient; and that the deputy quartermaster be directed to enclose the same within a pale-fence."

It is further voted and resolved that whenever the said farm shall be sold this State will make reservation of the said burial ground" (R. I. Col. Rec. IX, 164-5). Apparently no such reservation was made when the farm was sold, and all trace of it has vanished.

Possibly the estate was not long used by the French troops, for in the *Providence Gazette* of October 11, 1780, it is adver-

tised with the other confiscated estate as "the State farm in Bristol late William Vassalls containing 220 acres" to be sold at public vendue to the highest bidder.

John Brown, of Providence, merchant, purchased the estate for £3293, 6s, 3d. His deed, November 20, 1781 (Bristol Land Evidence Book 4, p. 225), from the General Treasurer conveys all the buildings "thereon standing except the Barracks erected there by the State." One of these barracks conveyed across the harbor on the ice to the town of Bristol still stands in a mutilated condition at 321 High Street.

Mr. Brown was the purchaser of several of the confiscated estates. He bought the farm of Joseph Wanton, Jr., on Prudence Island (Tiverton Land Evidence Book 7, p. 129), the farm of George Roome in North Kingstown (North Kingstown Land Evidence Book 15 A, p. 185), where the convivial bachelor parties described by Wilkins Updike were held, and also the mansion of George Roome, formerly the residence of Henry Collins at the Point (now Washington Street), Newport (Newport Land Evidence Book IV, p. 99).

At the time of the French occupancy, the Vassall farm was leased to Nathaniel Fales, Jr., for £153, who claimed a rebate upon account of the damages he sustained by reason of a number of barracks being erected upon the said farm and improved as hospitals for His Most Christian Majestys army and Fleet (R. I. Col. Rec. IV, 342) and the Assembly granted him £58, 10s to be deducted from the rent (R. I. Col. Rec. IX, 357).

In 1801, Mr. Brown's daughter Sally married Charles Frederick Herreshoff, a Prussian importer settled in New York City. Not long after the couple removed to Providence, and Mr. Herreshoff devoted himself to the improvement of Point Pleasant, as the old Vassall Estate on Poppasquash was now called. The house was remodelled, gardens were laid out and plants were imported, but the death of Mr. Brown in 1803 changed the situation. By his will September 13, 1802, probated 1803 (Providence Will Book 9, p. 260), he devised to his daughter Sarah Herreshoff "a farm or tract of land in Bristol called Point Pleasant containing two hundred and twenty one acres

with all the building and appurtenances on which she now dwells."

Through the action of his son-in-law and partner, John Francis, John Brown became the owner of over 200,000 acres of wild Adirondack land, which he divided into eight townships. These had at the time of his death proved unremunerative, and it was to render this tract productive that Charles Herreshoff made his home in the Adirondack wilderness, where he died in 1819. Point Pleasant was later the home of his son, Charles Frederick Herreshoff, and here were born his sons John B. Herreshoff and Nathaniel G. Herreshoff, famous for the racing yachts they designed and built.

Early American Shoe Buckles

BY HARALD W. OSTBY

How many of us, while rummaging around in old attics, antique shops or museums, have given much thought to the old pair of shoe buckles which we may have noticed. We could have hardly suspected the importance of such buckles in the every day costume of early times, or could we have realized what part they played in the jewelry industry of this section of the country.

Were we to glance back to the time that our country was settled, the costume of the colonists would be somewhat of a shock to us. Our impression of the Puritan fathers is probably one of severe simplicity in dress and mode of living. How little do we realize that, although of necessity they lived very simply, their dress reflected not only the times but the part of England from which they emigrated.

A study of the English costume of the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Century shows that it was a period of great extravagance and richness. The vanity of the French and English rulers of the times was reflected in their extreme dress. In America, just as in England, people paid close attention to their attire—its richness, its elegance, its modishness. They also

watched closely the attire of their neighbors, not only from a distinct liking for dress, but from a regard of social distinction. Dress was a badge of rank, social standing, dignity and class distinction, and was just as zealously guarded in America—the Land of Liberty—as in England. Every season the settlers eagerly sought to learn the changes of fashion in England from incoming ships and travelers.

Our forebears did not change the style of their dress by emigration. They may have worn heavier clothing in New England, more furs and stronger shoes, but history does not tell that they adopted simpler or less costly clothing. It is very probable that richness of dress was more manifest in Boston than in other parts. There the men were mainly of the professional and middle class, and were unlike the early Colonists of the South.

How can we better visualize the dress of the day than to describe one of the costumes. It consisted of a falling band, short green doublet with wide arm pits slashed towards the shoulders and zig-zag turned up ruffles, long green breeches tied below the knee, yellow ribbed stockings, great shoe buckles and a short red cloak.

It was quite natural under these conditions that men's shoes received considerable attention. They were at this time made with short, square toes, heavy soles and usually high red heels. Those of the women were very soft and thin, and as a rule of silks and satins. In fact, they were so soft and thin that our Colonial ladies when compelled to walk wore a heavy, wooden-soled clout to protect their feet and slippers.

The extreme long toe was the early fashion in men's shoes. This style reached such an extreme that it became necessary to hang the toe of the shoe up with a chain caught at the knee. Such shoes were fastened over the instep with short laces decorated by large, highly colored shoe roses.

It was natural that the style should swing to the other extreme, when blunt toes came into vogue. This style required a different ornament to overcome the ugliness of the toe, and it was at this time that the metal shoe buckle was introduced, being

at first very small, but quickly becoming large and very ornate. Shoe buckles were worn to such an extent in England that it is recorded about thirty thousand workmen were employed in Birmingham alone in the manufacture of them. A great many fine patterns were imported from France. Buckles were worn in France until the time of the Revolution, when luxuries were given up and precious metals of all kinds confiscated by the State. They continued to be worn in England until the close of the Eighteenth Century, when their use declined and gradually disappeared. They were, however, worn at Court for many years. It is natural to expect that the Colonists continued this style as long as their English relatives, although they had adopted a much larger and less ornate shape. So great a panic was created by the buckle going out of fashion that the manufacturers petitioned the Prince of Wales to use his influence to prevent buckles being given up. He went so far as to inaugurate a new style, but this did no good.

It is curious to note that the shoe string (considered effeminate at that time) took the place of the buckle. With the adoption of the shoe string, the height of the shoe was gradually increased, and it was then that long trousers reaching to the instep came into fashion.

In England as well as America very little has ever been written on the use and manufacture of shoe buckles, and yet they played an important part in the costume as an article of adornment. A study of early portraits shows them to be a part of every costume, and the many different styles denote the thought given to their choice. "Cover the Buckle" was a favorite dance step of the time, and the infant mind was taught the refrain "One, Two, Buckle My Shoe."

The manufacturing of shoe buckles was probably much more difficult for these early craftsmen than the designing. What tools or machines they had were operated by hand, and the melting of metals very difficult. The large outside dimensions, the thickness in the middle of the buckle, and the extreme curves of the piece made hand work impossible. To cut the centre would mean a waste of material, which would add too much to the

cost. It seems evident that this problem was solved by the jeweler buying a casting from the foundry. In this way thickness and curve could be obtained in one operation, and there would be no necessity of cutting out the center. The jeweler then smoothed the rough casting off with a file, making it ready to apply the precious metal to the top. This was accomplished by beating out very thin whatever metal was to be used, and attaching it to the blank. He used a piece of tin to braze these two parts together, and the process was called "plating." The difficulty with this form of plating is that when the tin does not run evenly the metals part in different places, and to overcome this a new process was invented called "close plating." It only differed from the first in that no solder was used, and the two metals were really melted together. When the blank reached this stage, it was only necessary to put a pattern on the precious metal, which was applied by what is termed a chasing tool. This is simply a hardened piece of steel, on one end of which a scroll pattern is cut. By turning the tool in different directions between each blow of a hammer on the other end, the desired pattern can be obtained. This tool is very simple for the average workman, and is used in place of a regular engraving tool, which cuts the pattern rather than embossing it. The shoe buckle of the times was usually a large, narrow, rectangular metal band, the center being open, in which was swung the attachment for holding it to the shoe. In order to cover this and the short shoe lace, a piece of leather was inserted in the open space, and held in place with another metal finger. These two sets of fingers were usually made of steel and riveted in place by a post which crossed in the middle of the narrow part of the buckle.

Shoe buckles differed from belt, knee or garter buckles in that they are larger and curved to fit over the instep. Belt and garter buckles in most instances were the same pattern, except the garter buckle was much smaller with very little curve. It also had a different arrangement of attachment.

The metals used in making buckles were generally gold, silver, pinchbeck, pewter, steel and brass. Most of the specimens indicate that it was the custom to make the back of an inferior and

stiffer metal, applying the precious metal to this. For this purpose, brass and pinchbeck were used the most. Brass is an alloy of one part zinc and three parts of copper. Pinchbeck, a metal said to be invented by Christopher Pinchbeck in 1670, was an alloy of one part zinc to ten of copper. The appearance of this metal was so much like gold that it appealed to all who, either through lack of means or because they were thrifty, thought gold too expensive a metal to use for this article of adornment. In those days when a journey of even a few miles led over roads infested by thieves, careful folk preferred not to tempt them by wearing expensive ornaments. This metal was used as an imitation of gold until well into the Nineteenth Century, when the process of electro plating made it easier and cheaper to deposit a wash of gold on any metal.

Brass and pinchbeck differ from each other slightly in color, brass being lighter. If unacquainted with the respective appearance of these metals, brass may be distinguished by having a metallic smell, especially when warmed a little. It is curious to note that pinchbeck was at first used in all forms of jewelry, but so aroused the indignation of the jewelers of precious metals that legal proceedings were instituted, which resulted thereafter in the alloy being only allowed for such things as shoe buckles and buttons.

Designs for buckles were obtained by embossing, piercing, varying the outer edge by setting stones and also by riveting to the top small, highly polished pieces of silver or steel, which reflected artificial light and imitated precious stones.

It might be of interest to explain how such a buckle is made in these days. Hand work being so expensive and machinery and melting processes so much more highly developed, the precious metal is first plated to a thick ingot, which is then rolled down to the required thickness between powerful rolls. It is cut into short pieces and the two ends thinned out by the use of what are called reversible rolls. This leaves the center the required thickness. It is then placed over a steel cutter plate set in a powerful press and a cutting plunger is forced down on it, which cuts out the large center piece. It is afterwards bent

into shape and struck into a die, which has a pattern on it, by a blow from a very heavy hammer set in a drop. Holes for the rivets are drilled or punched and the attachment for applying it to the shoe riveted on, which completes the manufacturing of the buckle with the exception of polishing. In these days, the making of shoe buckles would not require what we term a jeweler. It is a machine operation, and does not require skilled labor.

The largest collection of early buckles ever made is owned in England by S. P. Fane, and the collection consists of about four hundred examples. Mr. Fane states that he has never found a buckle containing the maker's mark. This might be accounted for by the fact that the article cannot be hall-marked, because it would not stand the precious metal test, and the maker would prefer to withhold his mark for such articles as he is able to have hall-marked.

History of the early days of our country shows that every town had its small jeweler, who made such articles as wedding rings and sold such jewelry as was imported from Europe. Tradition says that during the years of our Revolution a French soldier, said to be a deserter from Lafayette's Army, settled in the town of North Attleboro and set up his forge, making shoe buckles and metal buttons. We have no authentic record of their being made in this city until 1788, when Cyril Dodge, a jeweler of Providence, carried on business two doors north of the Baptist Meeting House on North Main Street. It is recorded that he manufactured shoe buckles and was successful in accumulating property. He built the Dr. Wheaton house and the Obadiah Brown house, and it was jokingly said that he paid for them in silver buckles. The real pioneer, however, seems to have been Nehemiah Dodge. In 1794, he began business on North Main Street, a few doors south of the historic First Baptist Church. He was the first manufacturer in this country to use gold plate, and records show that when he died in 1826 he left the large estate of \$70,000.

It is sometimes thought that one of the reasons why this industry located in Providence was on account of the develop-

ment in the metal industry resulting from the establishment of the shop of Joseph Jenks in Pawtucket. He took out the first machinery patent in America in 1650, and it is probably that the problem of producing machines for making belt buckles was worked out by men trained in this shop. It is also possible from the fact that our city was an important maritime port of the times that a great many buckles were imported from Europe. Then again, there were many English and French soldiers quartered in this locality, and through them there must have been an opportunity for getting new designs. The loot of privateers landed here must have contained some very interesting examples of buckles.

We have cause to be thankful that we are spared the struggles with a shoe buckle. We may swear innocently at a collar button or a dress shirt necktie, but the old Puritans evidently swore roundly at their shoe buckles. Here is a quotation from an old English record: A master one day overheard a worker cursing the man who was to wear the buckles on which he was working. "Why?" inquired the astonished master. The worker replied, "Because I know when he wears them he will curse the maker, and I thought I would be first."

Ninigret's Naval Campaigns against the Montauks.*

By LEICESTER BRADNER.

The most significant factor in the condition of Indian politics found by the English on their arrival in New England was the long standing enmity between the Pequot-Mohegan combination of Connecticut and the Narragansett-Niantic group of Rhode Island. Some time before 1620 the Pequots must have crossed the Sound and invaded Long Island, for in the earliest notices of the Montauk Indians we find them subject

*(NOTE—As the published *Acts of the Commissioners of the United Colonies* are arranged chronologically, it has not been thought necessary to give page references.)

to the Pequots and paying them tribute. In this way the Montauks, already occasional enemies of the Niantics, as we may judge from the traditions of their great chief Mongotucksee, became permanently arrayed against them by reason of the aid and abettance they were forced to give their superior allies. In addition to this political alignment of forces there was an economic background to the struggle. The waters of Montauk Point abounded in shell fish, the source of the highly prized wampum. The Narragansett tribes also dealt largely in the wampum trade and they must have been attracted by the pleasing possibility of returning from Long Island with a liberal cargo of this coinage.

The sudden destruction of the Pequot power by Capt. Mason in 1637 removed the dreaded foes of the Niantics and left them free to raid the Montauks without fear of an attack on their own homes while they were away. In the very next year, before the Long Islanders had had time to fully realize that their masters, who, as it now appeared, had also been their protectors, were gone, the Niantics under their chief Janemo crossed the Sound and attacked them. (I am not yet clear as to whether the name Janemo signifies Ninigret's father or was another name for Ninigret himself. We hear no mention of it after 1646.) In this raid he was successful enough to carry away considerable booty and some prisoners (See Savage's edition of *Winthrop's Journal*, I, 267). He had not long enjoyed his triumph, however, before an expedition from Connecticut under the command of the redoubtable Capt. Mason, destroyer of the Pequots, arrived at his residence and demanded reparation for the injuries. Janemo seems to have made the restitution demanded and troubled the Montauks no more for a number of years. It may seem remarkable to us, as indeed it did to some people in those days, that Connecticut should attempt to interfere in a quarrel between two Indian tribes neither of which was within its boundaries. This colony based its claims against Janemo on the grounds that they, as conquerors of the Pequots and sovereigns of the remnants of that tribe, were entitled to all the rights and privileges formerly accruing to it. As one of

these rights, formerly exercised by the Pequots, was that of collecting tribute from the Montauks, Connecticut was violently averse to having anyone impair their ability to pay. This action is significant and in the following account of Ninigret's relations with the Montauks it must be remembered that the struggle was always a three cornered one, with Connecticut as the third party always trying to protect her interest in the tribute by inciting the Commissioners of the United Colonies to act against the incorrigible Niantic chief.

Following this raid of Janemo's there do not seem to have been any further hostilities until 1653. In the *Acts of the Commissioners of the United Colonies* for September of this year we find it stated that "upon information received by letters first from Capt. Mason, afterwards from Mr. Haines, Governor of Connecticut, of an hostile assault made by the Narragansett Indians upon some of the Long Island Indians, who are tributaries and friendly to the English colonies, in the night; in which it is affirmed that two sachems and about thirty other Indians are slain and divers women taken captives; the Commissioners thought fit to send messengers" to demand an explanation from the Narragansett chieftains. Richard Waite and John Barrell were sent on this embassy and, after thrilling experiences in the Niantic country, where their lives were repeatedly threatened, returned with the following answer from Ninigret: "Why do the English slight me and respect the Long Islanders and Mohegans, seeing all around me are my friends and do love me? Why do they inquire the grounds of my war against the Long Islanders? Did they not hear that the Long Islanders murdered me a man? Is it so strange to them? Have they not heard it again and again?" (Roger Williams, who had spoken with Ninigret's chief men, confirmed this explanation of the cause of the war. See Potter, pp. 50-51.) The man here mentioned by Ninigret was put to death at Hartford for having attempted to take the life of Wyandanch, the Long Island sachem. He confessed, according to the Commissioners, before his execution that he was sent by Ninigret in disguise and

entered Wyandanch's service. He had tried to shoot him and had missed.

Ninigret's answer was not considered satisfactory by the Commissioners and they declared war against him, voting a levy of 250 men. Simon Bradstreet, representing Massachusetts, dissented from this decision, saying he saw no reason for the colonies to interfere in Indian quarrels, "the grounds whereof they cannot well understand." Massachusetts, which had no tribute from the Montauks at stake, refused to raise her quota (166 men) and the campaign was never undertaken.

The reference to female captives in the reports of this campaign make it probable that the account of the capture of Wyandanch's daughter given by Alexander Gardiner in an account of his ancestor Lyon Gardiner of Easthampton, L. I., (written 1842, published in *Coll. Mass. Hist. Soc.*, X, 173-185; see p. 182) is to be referred to this year. "In the midst of the revelry of her bridal night," says Gardiner, "the daughter of Wyandanch was seized by the Narragansetts and carried off with many others into captivity. The tribe had been surprised on this festive occasion and the bridegroom fell among the warriors that were slain. Gardiner, after many efforts, succeeded in redeeming this girl long before the termination of the war; and Wyandanch presented him with the region of country on Long Island which now bears the name of Smithtown."

In the following year (i. e., 1654) it was again reported to the Commissioners that Ninigret was attacking the Montauks and that he had hired Pequots and upland Indians to help him. Jonathan Gilbert, having been sent to interview Ninigret, returned with the following answer. The Long Islanders had slain a sachem's son and sixty men while visiting Block Island. This was the son of Ninigret's brother Wepitemoc and consequently one of the most important persons in the tribe (See Williams's letter in Potter, 50-51, where the number of men is given as thirty). "Therefore he will not make peace with the Long Islanders but doth desire the English would let him alone; adding, if your Governor's son were slain and several other men would you ask counsel of any other nation how and when to

right yourselves?" As to the Pequots, he admitted having hired them and said "If any of them be slain in his service, he is to pay a certain sum of peage to his friends, some more, some less."

This answer being deemed, as usual, unsatisfactory, Maj. Simon Willard was sent with 310 men to demand reparation and tribute from Ninigret. Maj. Willard went to "Ninigret's ordinary place of residence," but found that he had retired 15 miles back into the country to a swamp. After some delay an interview was secured in which Ninigret refused to make peace with the Long Islanders and to pay the expenses of Willard's expedition, but agreed to give up any Pequots in his command. This, however, we find in a record of the following year, he did not carry out and the Commissioners censured Maj. Willard for not having put more fear into Ninigret's heart while the army was there and "his mouth as in the dust." They also complained that Ninigret had again in that year invaded the Long Island Indians and shed some blood. Advice now being received from Long Island that the Indians there were so sadly reduced as to be unable to protect themselves, a vessel under the command of Mr. John Young was appointed to patrol the waters of the Sound. Ninigret was to be warned to keep the peace and if he did not, "you shall improve your best endeavors to disturb his passage to and prevent his landing upon Long Island, by taking, sinking, and destroying so many of his canoes employed in that service as shall come within your power." Evidently this blockade was successful, for we hear of no more attacks until a brief skirmish on Gull Island in 1660.

The result of these wars was that Wyandanch, when in Plymouth in 1656, acknowledged that his tribute was four years in arrears. The payment of these sums was excused in view of his present troubles. The question of the Montauk tribute is not very clear. In 1658 the Commissioners let Wyandanch know that they expected tribute for the last two years; in 1659 forty fathoms were received from them. No payment from the Montauks appears in 1660 (possibly due to Ninigret's raid on them in that year) nor were any received thereafter. On the

other hand, Ninigret seems to have been extracting tribute from them. In a statement in 1669 in answer to a charge of conspiring against the English, made by the Rhode Island Council, he said that "this report had been raised against him by a Long Island Indian: that he had formerly taken captive their sachem's daughter and obliged them to pay him tribute. The sachem and his daughter were now dead and there had been some difficulty about paying the tribute, but they had lately paid it." (Potter, p. 72.) By combining these two sources we may hazard a guess—it can be no more than a guess—that the situation developed as follows: from 1653 to 1658 Ninigret forced the Montauks to pay tribute to him; in 1659, the year of Wyandanch's death, the advisers of the latter's young son decided to pay it to Connecticut; in 1660, after Ninigret had murdered six Montauks on Gull Island, the tribute reverted to him.

The final outcome of the Niantic-Montauk feud was, as we learn from Hedge's *History of Easthampton* (pp. 16-17), that "after the tribe had been almost exterminated they came about the year 1660 from Montauk and resided upon the pasturage at the south end of the town street." The same volume (p. 206) records a deed of Wionkombone, son of Wyandanch, containing a rather pathetic reference to the "sore distress and calamities befallen us by reason of the cruel opposition and violence of our most deadly enemy, Ninicraft, sachem of Narhigansett, whose cruelty hath proceeded so far as to take away the lives of many of our dear friends and relations, so that we were forced to fly from the said Montauquit for shelter to our beloved friends and neighbors of Easthampton." Altogether, between the rule of the Pequots, the Connecticut tax collector, and the ferocity of Ninigret, the lot of the Montauks was hard.

Notes

Mrs. Richard W. Comstock, Jr., has presented to the Society, as a memorial to her husband, the Rhode Island ship models and ship pictures that he had collected. One of them is the painting of the steamboat "Massachusetts" in a storm, which is reproduced on the cover of this issue of the "Collections."

The "Massachusetts," which was built in New York under the direction of Captain William Comstock, grandfather of Richard W. Comstock, Jr., sailed from New York on Saturday, April 2, 1836, and made her first trip to Providence in thirteen hours and thirty-two minutes. The following item appeared in the *Republican Herald*:

"STEAMBOAT MASSACHUSETTS.—This splendid boat arrived at the Rail Road Depot in this city, on Sunday morning last, in less than fourteen hours from New York. While lying at the Depot, she attracted crowds of admiring visitors, who came to view this magnificent vessel. We hazard nothing in saying that in point of beauty, accommodations and safety, she is exceeded by no steamboat in the world, nor is it believed that she will prove inferior to many in point of speed. She is commanded by the veteran Captain W. Comstock, who is too well known to need our praise.

The Massachusetts is built of live oak and cedar, and measures 713 tons, 202 feet on deck, 29 feet beam, 12 feet hold, is propelled by two low pressure engines, each of 145 horse power, with two heavy copper boilers. The cabin is 170 feet in length, containing 142 berths."

The collection will be known as the Richard W. Comstock, Jr., Memorial Collection, and will greatly strengthen the maritime section of our museum, which has been remarkably weak considering the state's former maritime glories.

Mrs. Rhea Louise Knittle, of Ashland, Ohio, Mrs. Susan M. D. Smith, of Providence, and Mr. Thomas C. Greene, of Potosi, have been elected to membership in the Society.

Mr. Benjamin Whitman has placed in the Society's museum the flag of the First North Providence Company of the Second Providence County Regiment. This flag was painted in 1834, and was carried during the Dorr War.

The October Bulletin of the Newport Historical Society contains an illustrated article on Green End Fort.

Mr. Frederick S. Sibley presented to the Society a pair of early silver plated buckles.

Additional information in regard to the English ancestry of William Almy, of Portsmouth, R. I., appears in the *New England Historical and Genealogical Register* for October, 1924.

Old Time New England for October, 1924 contains an illustrated article on Newport gravestones.

The November 10, 1924, issue of *Motor Boat* comments on a recent article that appeared in our "Collections" as follows: "Those interested in the Block Island boat will find a mine of valuable information in a monograph on the subject, written by Paul C. Nicholson for the Rhode Island Historical Society." The *Motor Boat* then discusses at some length the cause of the disappearance of these peculiar boats.

Mr. George L. Miner delivered an interesting lecture on early New England ships at the October meeting of the Society.

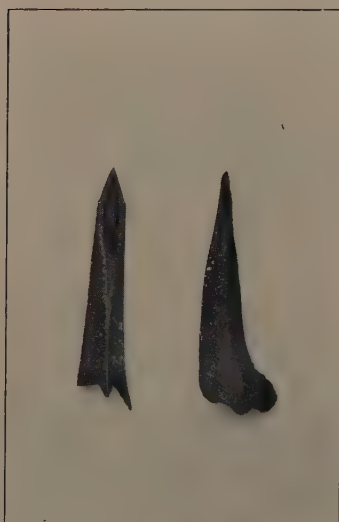
Mr. John R. Hess generously contributed several of the photographs used to illustrate the article on Indian implements.

The manuscript *Constitutional History of Rhode Island*, which was written by the late Sidney S. Rider, has been given to the Society by Mr. Walter F. Angell, Hon. Jesse H. Metcalf, Mr. Stephen O. Metcalf, Col. Samuel M. Nicholson and Mr. Zachariah Chafee.

Indian Implements Found in Rhode Island

(Concluded)

Most of the wood, bone and horn implements and utensils as well as the garments and canoes have long since disappeared, as might be expected from the perishable character of the materi-



Bone arrow-heads found in Warren, R. I. The one at right is considered an awl by some and an unfinished arrow-head by others. One-half actual size.

From the Society's Museum.



Horn arrow-heads, found at Burr's Hill, Warren, R. I. About actual size.

In the Museum of the American Indian, Heye Foundation, New York

als. A few bone implements such as arrow-heads, awls, needles and fish-hooks, and a horn spoon and some horn arrow-heads have been found. Further excavations would doubtless lead to the discovery of more specimens of this sort. The Indians are

said to have had needles of thorn and of horn as well as of bone, and fish-lines, seines and nets of thong and hemp.

Shell-heaps or "kitchen middens"¹ can be found scattered



Basket made about 1675. Almost actual size. See text.

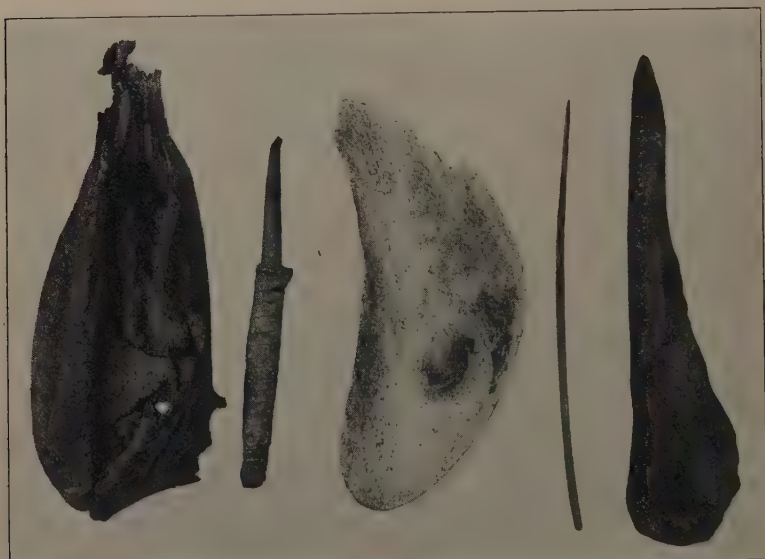
From the Society's Museum

about the state in the neighborhood of the old Indian encampments. In addition to broken shells and bones, these heaps often

¹N. H. R. vi. 26.

contain chipped fragments, stone implements and pieces of broken soapstone pottery.

One example of the basketry work of the Narragansett Indians is preserved at the Society's museum. Miss Field's statement in regard to it is as follows: "This little basket was given by a squaw, a native of the forest, to Dinah Fenner, wife



Deer-skin paint-bag ($6\frac{1}{2}$ inches long), deer-skin paint brush, bone spoon, bone needle and bone awl. From Burr's Hill, Warren, R. I.

*In the Museum of the American Indian,
Heye Foundation, New York*

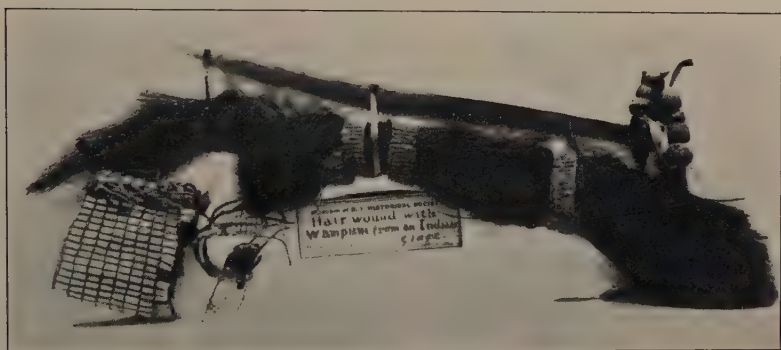
of Major Thomas Fenner, who fought in Church's Wars, then living in a garrison in Providence now Cranston, R. I.

"The squaw went into the garrison. Mrs. Fenner gave her some milk to drink, she went out by the side of a river, pulled the inner bark from the Wickup¹ tree, sat down under the tree, drew the shreds out of her blanket, mingled them with the bark,

¹Basswood or linden tree.

wrought this little basket, took it to the garrison, and presented it to Mrs. Fenner. Mrs. Fenner gave it to her daughter, Free-love, wife of Samuel Westcoat. Mrs. Westcoat gave it to her granddaughter, Wait Field, wife of William Field at Field's Point. Mrs. Field gave it to her daughter, Sarah. Sarah left it with her sister, Eleanor, who now presents it to the Historical Society of Rhode Island.

"Field's Point, September, 1842."



A section of a wampum belt, and some hair artificially colored red and wound with copper beads, found in an Indian grave, Westerly, R. I. About one-fourth actual size.

From the Society's Museum.

Professor Willoughby has made a careful examination of this basket and has discovered that the horizontal woof is made of corn husk.

The wampum or wampum-peage of the Indians consisted of strings of purple (often called "black") and white beads made of shell, and was used as money both by the Indians and the early European colonists. William B. Weedon¹ and other students of the subject state that the Indians had very little wampum before the coming of the Europeans. Roger Williams in 1643, wrote "Before ever they had awle blades from Europe, they made shift to bore this their shell money with stones." Most of the wampum that has been found is supposed to have been

¹Johns Hopkins University Studies, Second Series viii.-ix.

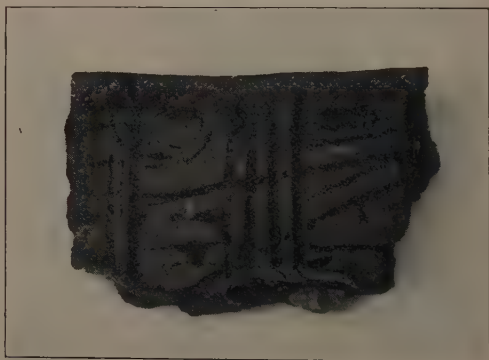
made with metal awls obtained from Europe. The wampum made with a metal awl has a hole of uniform size the entire length of the bead and so can easily be distinguished from the wampum made with a stone awl which has a hole slightly tapering from each end of the bead, larger at the ends and smaller near the center.

The white money, called wampum, was, to quote Williams



Clay pipe found in Washington County, R. I., by Mr. Willard Kent and given by him to the Society. About one-half actual size.

From the Society's Museum.



Fragment of pottery dug up at Arnolda, Charlestown, R. I. Actual size.

From the Society's Museum

again, "made of the stem or stock of the periwinkle which they called Meteahock, when the shell is broken off." The black money was called suckauhock and was worth twice the value of the white. This black money was made from the purple part of the quohaug shell, which was called by the Indians "sequnock" or "poquahock" and by the English "hens."

These money beads, now usually all called wampum, were generally about a quarter of an inch or more long, an eighth of

an inch in diameter and pierced lengthwise by a small hole so that they could be strung. The outside of these beads was smooth and polished. Of course they vary greatly in size and workmanship. The black beads are really a dark purple. The



Pottery ornamented with the so-called "frog design," found at Wakefield, R. I. The restored pot stands ten inches high.

*In the Museum of the American Indian,
Heye Foundation, New York*

beads of the poorer sort passed at a discount and counterfeit beads were also made. Williams states that, "counterfeit shells," were used for this counterfeit money, and sometimes the black shell beads were "counterfeited by a stone and other materials."

Larger beads were also made out of shell. Shells were used

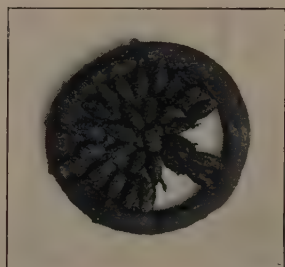
for various purposes as occasion offered. A so-called hoe is exhibited in the museum. Roger Williams states that the Indians used hoes of shell and wood¹.

The Narragansett Indians made pottery and according to Roger Williams this work was done by the women². Fragments of broken pottery are found in Rhode Island and many of these fragments show the crude Indian ornamentation. Burnt and



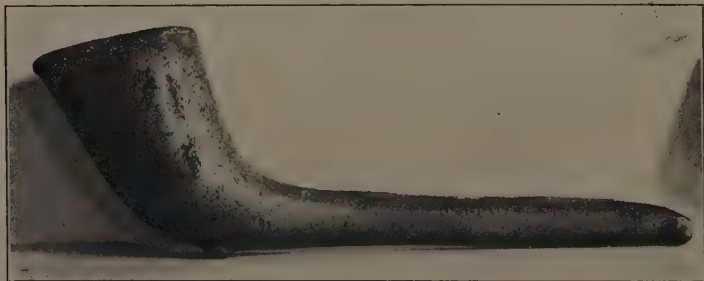
Brass bangle, probably of Indian workmanship, from grave of Princess Ninigret. Actual size.

From the Society's Museum.



Ornament made of copper beads and a copper ring. Found in Indian grave at Charlestown, R. I. Actual size.

From the Society's Museum

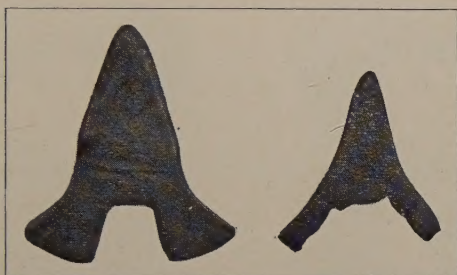


Metal pipe made of pewter or some alloy, found in Warwick, R. I. Actual size.

In the Museum, Memorial Hall, Peace Dale, R. I.

¹R. I. H. S. Coll. Vol. 1, Chap. xvi. and xxiv.

²The women make all their earthen vessels. R. I. H. S. Coll. Vol. 1, Chap. xxv.



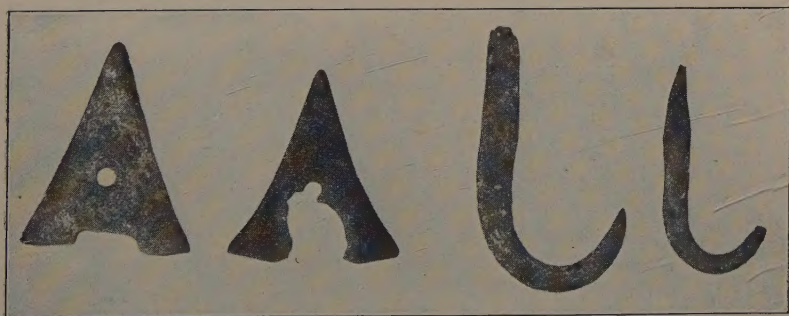
Copper arrow-heads found at Quonset Point, R. I. Actual size.

In the collection of Sidney R. Turner



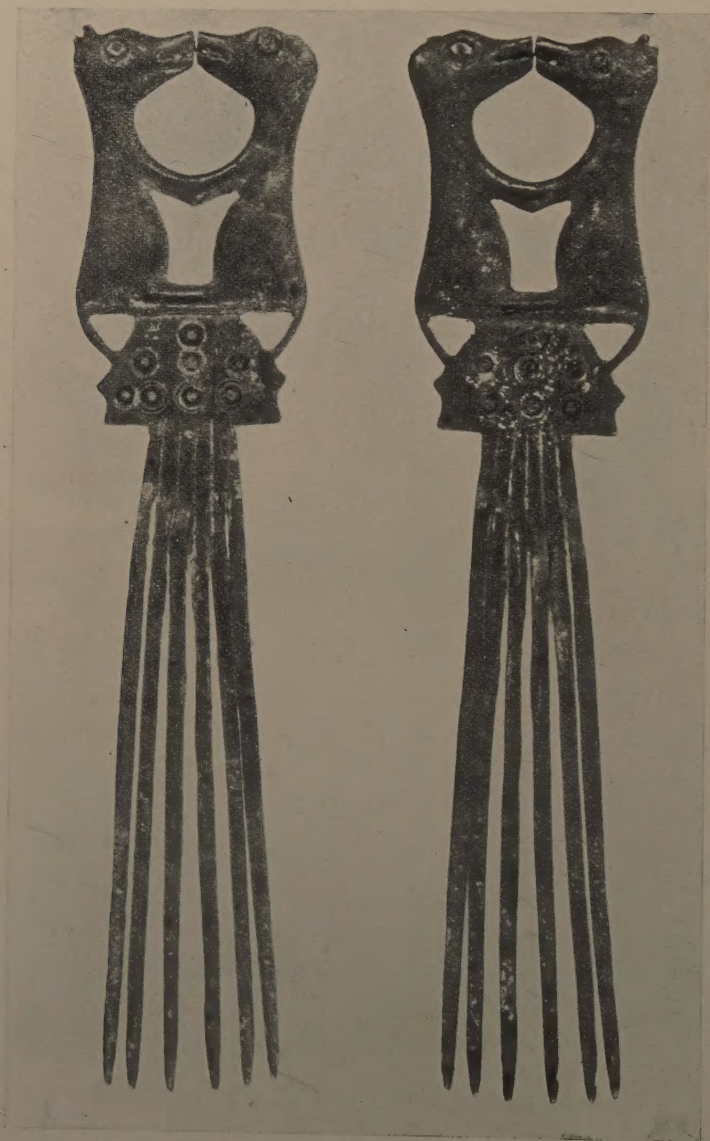
Cone-shaped copper arrow-head found in Indian grave at Pawtuxet, R. I. Actual size.

In the Hudson Collection, Phenix, R. I.



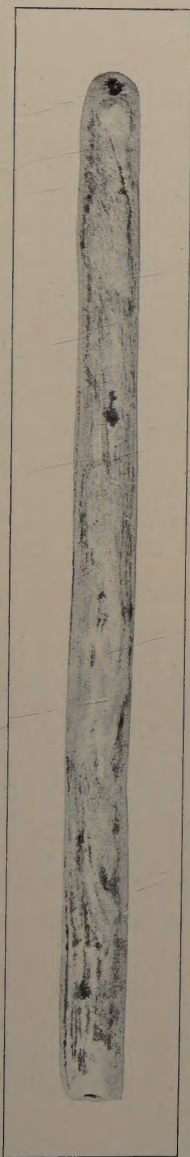
Copper arrow-heads found at Tiverton, and copper fish-hooks washed out of an Indian grave at Bullock's Point, R. I. Actual size.

*In the Museum of the American Indian,
Heye Foundation, New York*



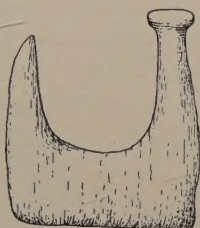
Brass hair ornament, found in the Indian graves at Charlestown, R. I.
Actual size.

From the Society's Museum.



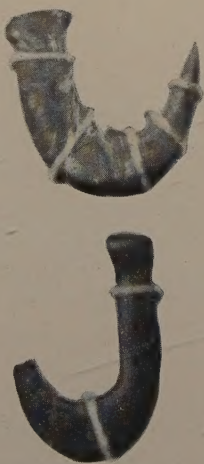
Long tubular shell bead dug up at Arnolda, Charlestown, R. I., in 1921. Actual size.

From the Society's Museum



Bone fish-hook found in a shell heap in Narragansett, R. I., by Thomas G. Hazard, Jr.

From a drawing by Foster H. Saville



Bone fish-hooks found in Narragansett by Thomas G. Hazard, Jr.

broken shell was often mixed in with the clay. Some of the pottery and an occasional clay pipe show Iroquoian characteristics. Such objects may have been obtained by trade, as the greenish soapstone pipes were, or the Narragansett potters may have been influenced by Iroquoian trade objects. The piece of pottery ornamented with the frog design, which was unearthed in South Kingstown some years ago in perfect condition and subsequently broken, had perhaps been obtained by trade.

The Indians obtained metal, pewter, brass and copper, from the Europeans and wrought various objects out of it. Such is probably the origin of the brass bangle, sometimes called a brooch, which hung from the wrist of the Indian Princess, probably Weunquesh, whose body was exhumed at Charlestown, R. I. The curious brass hair ornament also found in a Charlestown grave may have been of local manufacture. They also made arrow-heads and fish-hooks of brass or copper.

The Narragansett Indians, soon after the arrival of the Europeans took up the work of casting metals. Williams in 1643 wrote "they have an excellent art to cast our pewter and brass into very neat and artificial pipes." Such a metal pipe made of some pewter or lead alloy was found at Warwick and is now preserved at Peace Dale. A stone mould for making metal ornaments is now in the Museum of the American Indian.

It is not possible in an article of this length to describe and illustrate every variant form of Indian implement found in Rhode Island, but merely to record characteristic examples of the principal type forms found in this locality and to show a few unusual specimens.

Many Indian graves have been opened in Rhode Island, some intentionally and some unintentionally, and many objects, some purely Indian and some trade objects of European origin, have been found in these excavations. Those of Indian workmanship have been described in these pages, but the trade objects not being illustrative of Indian industrial development have been left for another paper.